

[Mrs. Fred Hutton]

Personal narrative [Mariaville, (neav)?] Prairie [Custorm?] Weeks 1 No. 2 [S?]-241-RO
Received 1/11/39 Acc 1/11/39 DUP

FORM A CIRCUMSTANCES OF INTERVIEW

NAME OF WORKER [E.?] Elmer E. Holm ADDRESS Mariaville, Nebraska

DATE January 9, 1939 SUBJECT Folklore

1. Name and address of informant [Mrs. Fred Button]
2. Date and time of interview Friday P.M. 1/7/39 also one afternoon about a week previous
3. Place of interview. In the home which is located on a large ranch on the south side of the Niobrara River about four miles northwest from Mariaville.
4. Name and address of person, who put you in touch with informant.

Mrs. C. P. Wiltse, Mariaville, Nebraska

5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

Mrs. E. E. Holm

6. Description of room, house, [surroundings?], etc.

In the living room. besides usual furniture and pictures, there was piano, a radio, and on the piano was a set of about 25 books. The was of frame construction and ample in size for the average family. The yard was full of trees so that you almost had to pick your way to find a driveway for your car. The boys were in the process of constructing a hay barn

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large enough to house 500 sheep. Spring water is piped near the house and to the barn. The yard was covered with a few inches of autumn leaves. C15 - 2/27/41 - Nebraska

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER E. E. Holm ADDRESS Mariaville, Nebraska

DATE 1/9/39 SUBJECT folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs. Fred Hutton, Bassett, Nebraska

1. Ancestry Canadian French
2. Place and date of birth Born in Keya Paha Co. 1882.
3. Family on farm at junction of Turkey Creek and Niobrara River Husband a rancher on Niobrara River, northwest of Mariaville. Boys do most of work.
4. Place lived in, with dates

Mrs. Hutton has lived in this region all her life. First with her parents in Keya Paha Co. west of Meadville, till in 1907 when she married Mrs Hutton then coming to Rock County.

5. Education, with dates

Received most of her education from her mother who had a large number of books, Almost memorized U. S. History, Attended a few short terms of rural school, beginning at the age of nine.

6. Occupation and accomplishments, with dates

Qualified to teach by taking examinations and taught five years before her marriage in 1907.

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7. Special skills and interests

Efficient housewife, raises poultry.

8. Community and religious activities

Now lives rather isolated because her husband cannot drive a care and her right hand and forearm are paralyzed, as a result of an infection a few years ago.

9. Description of informant

Energetic and mentally alert, attractive and youthful looking, ignores her affliction, shows the French and ancestry in large brown eyes, and black curly hair.

10. Other points gained in interview

They have four children, two of the boys are married and live near home gardening on spring irrigated land, one boys is at home and the daught is a senior in high school.

Although Mrs Hutton is not old enough to considered among the very oldest old timersyet she had a large amount of information about the early days because her parents were among the first settlers and her husband who is several years older was also and early settler. She is full of interesting ealy early day reminiscenses.

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER E. E. Holm ADDRESS Mariaville, Nebraska

DATE 1/9/39 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs. Fred Hutton

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Mrs Hutton's father, Mr. La Rue, had been a freighter from Sidney, Nebr. to the Black Hills. "Father never had any trouble, because he tended to his business and kept his mouth shut, That was the safest thing to do in those days of outlawry." She says he followed the same policy during the Vigilante and horse stealing period in Keya Paha County.

[Hergar Her grandfather was killed probably by Indians, while hunting on the Dismal River in 1879, They found him his body with his gun pointing toward camp. It was the custom to point the gun in that direction before going to sleep in order to know the directions when waking. ?]

Her father knew Doc Middleton when at Sidney. Doc was not a bad sort. He was a perfect gentleman. He became involved in a saloon brawl, in which a man was killed, and as a fugitive from the law was forced into the kind of life he led in this section of Nebraska, as a horse thief. CHIMNEY CREEK on the north side of the Niobrara River was named from the ruins of an old building of which only the chimney remained. MURPHY CANYON, about ten miles southeast of the present site of Springview was so called from the fact that in November 1883 a man named Murphy was lynched, and found hanging to a tree. This was at the time when Vigilante Vigilance committees were busy. SPRINGVIEW, the present county seat of Keya Paha Co. was named from a large spring nearby. MEADVILLE, a few miles down the river east from the La Rue home, was the a post office named for the postmaster, Merrit Meade. It is one of the most scenic spots in Nebraska, but it was then a very rough place and outlaws often passed through.

A local character, eccentric and rough, Mrs. Mary Williams had a homestead on Plum Creek, a few miles west of Meadville. Her husband cut his arm off in a saw mill, and later bled to death, while his wife tried to stop the blood by holding tight around the arm, spilling blood on herself. Old man Meade, a crude spoken man, gave the man of 'Bloody Mary,' which clings to this day and local people still tell stories of her eccentricities, many of them not likely true. Her shack is pointed out to strangers. She died many years ago.

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MARRIAGES were usually performed by justices of peace because ministers were very scarce.

ENTERTAINMENT

“Lyceums” a later literaries, spelling bees, box socials, and dances were the chief forms of entertainment for the young and old. Young people were well behaved at dances, then. The fiddle was usually the only instrument, but a few sttlers had organs on which they chorded. Mrs. Hutton has been to at dances where only a harmonica was used. Harmonicas were common. Square dances prevailed. Usually not enough room for any other kind. A few waltzes, two-steps, and Scotistishes Scottishes were common, but few men could waltze waltz. Room was so limited that wagons were backed to the house, and the children put to bed on hay in the wagons. Mrs. Hutton recalls seeing apple pies stacked and all cut trough at once because of lack of room.

Boys played horseshoe and held target-shooting contests on Sunday afternoons.

SONGS

They often sang two “NebraskaLand” songs. One praised Nebraska, but Mrs. Hutton couldn't recall it. It was sung to the air of “Buelah Land”. She recalled a verse of the other. “We have no wheat, we have no oats We have no corn to fee the shoats Our chickens are to thin to eat The pigs go squealing down the street”

After a woman was robed and killed, and a man with two small girls was killed some of the Vigilantes received notice to leave the country which they did.